

SOVIET ASSURES U.S. ON CONSULS

Said at Glassboro Meeting
It Would Ratify Treaty

By JOHN W. FINNEY
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WASHINGTON, July 7—The Soviet Union, United States officials reported today, gave assurances at the conference in Glassboro, N.J., that it would ratify the consular treaty with the United States, although it made no commitments on when.

Despite the vagueness on timing, the assurances gave new encouragement to Administration officials that the Soviet Union still desired certain limited steps toward East-West cooperation.

The treaty, establishing consular relations between the two nations, has become a diplomatic touchstone of how far and how quickly the two nations can move toward establishing some form of détente.

The treaty was ratified by the United States last March, but since then there has been no action on it by the Soviet Union.

Conservative Charges

In part, the Soviet inaction is viewed here as retribution for charges by conservative groups in the United States that the treaty would increase the opportunities for Soviet espionage.

But Soviet diplomats have been spreading the word that the delay also reflects a reluctance to take any bilateral steps toward cooperation as long as the Vietnam war continues.

At the Glassboro summit conference, however, United States officials gained the impression from Premier Aleksei N. Kosygin and Foreign Minister Andrei A. Gromyko that Vietnam did not represent an insuperable obstacle to Soviet ratification of the treaty.

Out of the Glassboro conference, United States officials believe, also came some narrowing of differences between the two major powers on the basic principles for a settlement of the Middle East crisis.

The Soviet Union, it is believed, accepts the principle that in an agreement the Arab states must recognize the existence of Israel.

United States officials also concluded that the Soviet Union would find no problem with an official termination of the state of war between the Arab states and Israel and a guarantee of freedom of passage through such international waterways as the Gulf of Aqaba and the Straits of Tiran.

Two Sides Disagree

To a certain extent, therefore, it is believed here that there is no immutable Soviet resistance to some of the principles for a peaceful settlement being advanced by both Israel and the United States.

At the same time, it is acknowledged that the two sides remain far apart on the first step toward a settlement. The Soviet Union insists on an immediate unconditional withdrawal of Israeli forces from Arab territory, while the United States links a withdrawal to a permanent peace settlement between Israel and the Arab states.

United States officials see no possibility now of reconciling the different approaches in debate in either the United Nations General Assembly or in the Security Council.

There is some hope, however, that the United Nations can provide a forum for some private negotiations for a settlement.

The United Nations, it is be-

lieved, also may provide a way for some of the Arab states to accept a settlement.

As an example, officials speculated on the possibility that the United Nations might declare the state of war ended between Israel and the Arab states, thus making it possible for the Arab states to accept something they would find politically impossible to accept in bilateral negotiations with Israel.

In private discussions with Arab diplomats, United States officials got the impression that some Arab states are having second thoughts about continuing their state of war and in time will accept the existence of Israel.

United States officials see no

encouraging signs that the Soviet Union will consider limitation on the Middle East arms race. In fact, the Soviet Union is apparently committed to replace half the aircraft and one-quarter of the armor lost by the Arab states in the Israeli war.

Just how far the Soviet Union intends to go in reequipping the Arabs, however, remains unclear to United States officials, and there is still some hope that the Soviet Union eventually will agree to an arms limitation.

The Glassboro conference, it is believed, was helpful in making clear to the Soviet Union that the American suggestion for an arms limitation was not a trick designed to guarantee Israeli military superiority.